

### ABOUT THE CAPITOL HILL ECODISTRICT

The Capitol Hill EcoDistrict (the EcoDistrict) was started in 2011 as a test lab for ideas that make our neighborhood safer, greener, healthier, and more equitable. This effort was initiated to ensure that as our neighborhood grew and changed, it did so in a way that kept Capitol Hill welcoming and accessible to everyone, no matter their background or income. Today, we organize efforts around a vision of environmental, social and cultural resilience and help scale up solutions that improve the lives of people locally and regionally.

**IMPERATIVES COMMITMENT ADOPTION DATE:** December 14, 2019

**ADOPTED BY:** Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Steering Committee.<sup>1</sup>

Neelima Shah

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Neelima Shah  
Steering Committee Co-chair

Michael Mariano

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**PREPARERS:** This document was drafted by Capitol Hill Housing (CHH) staff with a working group of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Steering Committee (CHEDSC).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://capitolhillecodistrict.org/steering-committee/>

## **DISTRICT BOUNDARY**

The Capitol Hill EcoDistrict begins at I-5 to the west and extends eastward to 18th Ave East. Its northern bound is East Aloha Street, and its southern bound is East Union Street with an addition running from Broadway to the west, 15th Avenue to the east, and East Jefferson Street to the south. This area corresponds to the campus of Seattle University.

## **EQUITY COMMITMENT**

The CHEDSC and CHH define “equity” as *all people having access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential*. To achieve this universal goal, we will seek to improve access for communities furthest from opportunities. We commit to advancing procedural, structural, distributional and cross-generational equity in all Capitol Hill EcoDistrict activities. Affordability and community development are foundational to the EcoDistrict vision and we strive to integrate equity into EcoDistrict development, leadership, project scoping and project delivery. The CHEDSC and CHH are committed to equity in the ongoing evolution and performance of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict, including its staffing, governance structure, establishment of objectives, development and tracking of indicators, prioritization of strategies, and implementation of projects.

## CURRENT CONDITIONS

CHH and the CHEDSC are committed to equity as both a goal and guiding principle. A big part of this commitment is engaging and empower vulnerable and historically underrepresented members of the community in defining and leading the EcoDistrict. Historically, power in the neighborhood has been concentrated in the hands of predominantly white major institutions, business owners, and property owners, even while the neighborhood’s resident population is more than 80 percent renters. Renters, workers, and students -- all of whom are more likely than owners to be people of color -- are all underrepresented in decision-making, especially low income and people of color members of these communities. Many LGBTQ community members have been priced out of living in the neighborhood, but still feel a deep sense of connection that needs to be incorporated into the EcoDistrict.

## Vulnerable Populations

A focus on equity is consistent with the identity and mission of CHH. CHH is a 40-year old community development corporation based in Capitol Hill with its roots in anti-redlining campaigns. CHH is committed to its evolution as a social justice organization.

CHH and the CHEDSC are committed to standing and working alongside vulnerable individuals and communities in the neighborhood. Vulnerable populations in the neighborhood include homeless people, low-income households, seniors, youth, the disabled, and groups targeted for discrimination, including people of color and LGBTQ folks. Especially vulnerable are people at the intersection of race, gender, gender-identity and other forms of discrimination.

According to the 2011-2016 American Community Survey (ACS), the following number of people from each of these categories lived in the EcoDistrict (King County Census Tracts 74.01, 74.02, 75, 84, 86):

- Total population: 22,981
- Homeless shelter residents: 223
- Seniors, 65 years and older: 1,562
- Youth, under 18: 1,079

- Disabled: 2,732
- Non-white: 8,918
- Total households: 17,319
- Households below federal poverty level: 4,299
- Same sex couples: 482

Data for some categories is incomplete, resulting from social biases that are explained below, organized by group identifier and relevant bias.

People experiencing homelessness: The ACS only counts homeless individuals and families who are staying in a shelter. People living on the street or in encampments are not included. King County conducts a one-night count of all homeless individuals, but this data is not available by neighborhood for privacy reasons. In 2018, the one-night count found 5,792 people living in shelters, and 6,320 unsheltered people throughout King County.

LGBTQ People: The ACS does not ask questions about sexual orientation or gender identity. The ACS does ask about unmarried couples by gender, which provides some information on couples in same-sex relationships, who remain unmarried. However, this is not a good reflection of the size of or changes in the LGBTQ population on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, the 90% confidence interval margin of error, 418, is nearly as big as the estimate itself, 482.

Many conditions have historically subordinated these vulnerable groups, including: racism, redlining, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, classism, xenophobia, ageism, and ableism. Racism and homophobia have played particularly important roles in Capitol Hill's recent history.

Racism: Capitol Hill sits astride Seattle historic racial divide. The southeastern portion of the neighborhood, along with the adjacent central district, was one of the only areas of the city without racially restrictive housing covenants. Other portions of the neighborhood aggressively put in place these covenants to exclude people of color. The history continues to shape patterns of racial exclusion in the neighborhood.

Homophobia: LGBTQ people, especially gay men, began moving to Capitol Hill in the 1970's. The neighborhood quickly became a refuge from harassment and discrimination. Capitol Hill has been the cultural heart of the Puget Sound region's LGBTQ community ever since. Most LGBTQ cultural institutions, events, and service providers, areas still based in the neighborhood, but recent price increases and an influx of straight nightlife businesses, have placed this community in an increasingly vulnerable position in the neighborhood.

The CHEDSC views equity work as long-term and evolving. Equity has been an increasing focus of the EcoDistrict since 2015 with the formation of an Equity and Engagement Working Group to develop a strategy to meaningfully engage renters in the EcoDistrict. The Equity and Engagement Working Group also was tasked with developing a process for ensuring that all EcoDistrict projects are filtered through an equity lens. That work led to the creation of an "Equity Questionnaire" that is used for project development and evaluation. The 3-page questionnaire addresses the following overarching questions:

- What are potential barriers to participation?

- Who is excluded, either intentionally or unintentionally, from the design, leadership and list of participants?
- What systemic equity issues does this project affect and how?
- What measures will be taken to address inequities in the project?

In 2016, the CHEDSC launched the Capitol Hill Renter Initiative (CHRI). The Initiative seeks to engage diverse renters, offering education and support to build skills in leadership, organizing and policy advocacy. The goal is to train renters to assume ownership of the Initiative and to equip them as leaders to serve in other settings, including local community councils, boards and City commissions. The success of the Capitol Hill Renter Initiative has fueled interest from other Seattle neighborhoods and led to the creation in 2017 of the Seattle Renters Commission, the first of its kind in the US, established “to advise the Mayor and City Council on issues and policies of importance to renters citywide.”<sup>2</sup>

CHH and the CHEDSC will seek opportunities to partner with local organizations that are led by women, people of color and LGBTQ individuals and follow their lead in identifying community assets and implementing strategies that build on their communities’ cultural foundation and resilience.

CHH and CHEDSC also have a working relationship with the City of Seattle. In 2015, the Seattle City Council passed a formal resolution recognizing CHH and the EcoDistrict as a partner in advancing health and resiliency priorities on Capitol Hill.

CHH and the CHEDSC are influenced by these three local government-led frameworks:

*City of Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative<sup>3</sup>*

The City of Seattle’s commitment to equity and equitable development is guided by the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), which is “a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. . . .RSJI builds on the work of the civil rights movement and the ongoing efforts of individuals and groups in Seattle to confront racism. The Initiative's long-term goal is to change the underlying system that creates race-based disparities in our community and to achieve racial equity.”

*City of Seattle Equitable Development Initiative and Equitable Development Framework<sup>4</sup>*

Capitol Hill EcoDistrict goals for equity are heavily influenced by the City of Seattle Equitable Development Initiative and Equitable Development Framework. According to the City’s website, “The Equitable Development Framework guides how the City prioritizes its work; shapes its budgets, policies, programs, and investments; and structures the implementation of targeted strategies and equitable development projects by using clear objectives for reducing disparities and achieving equitable outcomes for marginalized populations.”

*King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan<sup>5</sup>*

CHH and the CHEDSC also work with King County, which itself has a formal commitment to race and social justice. From the website: “Launched by King County Executive Ron Sims in 2008 and formalized

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/council/issues/renters-commission>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/rsji>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/opcd/ongoing-initiatives/equitable-development-initiative>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice.aspx>

by Executive Dow Constantine and the Metropolitan King County Council via ordinance in 2010, Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) is an integrated part of the County’s work and is supported by the ESJ Office since it was established in early 2015.”

### EQUITY WORK PLAN

Equity in the Formation Phase:

1. Recruit and develop leaders from among historically underrepresented or oppressed community members to serve on the EcoDistrict Steering Committee and other public governance bodies, e.g. the Seattle Renters Commission (ongoing).

Equity in the Roadmap Phase:

2. Enable and encourage participation of vulnerable groups in Roadmap development (2019).
3. Develop performance indicators that reflect a commitment to equity and address structural equity issues (2019).
4. Utilize equity questionnaire for prioritizing projects (2019).

Equity in the Performance Phase:

5. Education of CHEDSC, CHH staff and allies, especially those who are white, cisgender, and/or straight, on issues of systemic oppression and practices in equity and inclusion (ongoing).
6. Baseline performance indicators and monitor on annual or biannual basis (2019, then annually).
7. Project scoping, delivery and evaluation that integrate equity analysis (ongoing).

### EQUITY WORKPLAN RESPONSIBILITIES

Capitol Hill Housing: CHH is the backbone organization of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict and provides staffing for its coordination and delivery of programs. Staff compiles and analyzes data for evaluating EcoDistrict initiatives and leads community engagement. CHH staff will lead work on Task 1 in the Performance Phase, bringing in external expertise when appropriate.

Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Steering Committee (CHEDSC): The CHEDSC is comprised of volunteers representing local organizations and entities, providing programmatic oversight of the EcoDistrict’s equity work. With support from CHH staff, the CHEDSC holds primary responsibility for implementation of tasks 2-7 implementing the tasks in the Formation and Roadmap Phases.

Capitol Hill Renter Initiative: The CHRI provides community organizing capacity and leadership development for renters on Capitol Hill. CHEDSC members and staff will engage the CHRI Leadership Committee on the Roadmap Phase.

### INDICATORS

We will track five initial indicators based on “equity drivers” used by the City of Seattle’s Equitable Development Initiative:

1. Housing cost burden by race and ethnicity
2. Homeownership rate by race and ethnicity
3. Education Equality Index
4. Local boards and commission appointments by race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, wealth and income
5. Travel time to work by race and ethnicity for workers

To provide context for changes to metrics within these drivers, we will regularly update a qualitative analysis of neighborhood demographic trends. This context is crucial because without context, equity metrics at the neighborhood level can often be misread. For example, if poverty rates fall in a neighborhood, is that because people living in poverty achieved better economic conditions or because they were pushed out of the neighborhood by rising housing costs? A qualitative contextual analysis can help us frame these metrics to better understand them. This analysis will rely on discussions with community members and community partners as well as data collection on indicators tracking:

- Income
- Education
- Poverty
- Age
- Race
- Language
- Ability
- Same-sex couples
- Housing tenure
- Homelessness
- Free and reduced lunch
- Length of residency/turnover
- Housing prices and unit types
- Employment and wages by sector

Finally, we will develop equity metrics for the governance and systems of the EcoDistrict. This will include the demographics of the CHEDSC, staff, and other participants in EcoDistrict decision making. It will also include tracking of systems for ensuring equity in EcoDistrict work.

#### EVALUATION AND ADJUSTMENT

The metrics proposed above will be regularly updated as new data becomes available and the findings inform program and project prioritization for ensuing work plans.

Programming is evaluated utilizing the Equity Questionnaire described in the Work Plan section. The Equity Questionnaire is completed by CHH staff during annual work planning and presented to and reviewed by the CHEDSC at the outset of a new programmatic year. An Equity and Engagement Committee reviews the questionnaires and recommends program adjustments. The questionnaires are reviewed again at the conclusion of a programmatic year.

Overall performance of the Equity Work Plan will be evaluated at the completion of the Formation phase of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict and be part of a biennial performance evaluation and report.

#### LETTER OF SUPPORT

Attached letter of support from Ubox Gardhere, Equitable Strategies Manager, Office of Planning and Community Development, City of Seattle.

#### **RESILIENCE COMMITMENT**

The CHEDSC and its lead agency, CHH, define resilience as the capacity of the Capitol Hill neighborhood to function, so that all people living and working in Capitol Hill, including the poor and vulnerable who may be most susceptible, survive and thrive no matter the stresses or shocks they encounter.

We are committed to advancing social, economic and environmental resilience within the EcoDistrict and sharing successful strategies with those outside the EcoDistrict. Grounded in our commitment to equity, we work closely with community partners, the City of Seattle, as well as state and regional entities, to positively adapt to change coming from both within and outside the neighborhood. We are

committed to building and maintaining a “strong bench” of leadership that is current on resilience challenges and opportunities.

The staff and leadership of the EcoDistrict will continue to remain current and access the diverse expertise necessary for addressing the biggest threats and stressors facing people and places in the EcoDistrict. We also will remain a place for gathering expertise from various sectors in the neighborhood, including representation on the CHEDSC from the public, business, education, healthcare, philanthropic, arts, environmental and housing sectors, plus individuals representing the interests of local open spaces, transportation/mobility infrastructure, renters, seniors, youth, and LGBTQ health and culture.

The Capitol Hill EcoDistrict will increase the neighborhood’s ability to cope with change and recover from potential stressors, including both human-caused and natural disasters. By strengthening existing social networks within the community; protecting, supporting, and enhancing the social safety nets; strengthening and growing the local business community; and by working to mitigate existing and potential environmental stresses and disasters, the CHED will increase the ability of the community to ride through these stresses while minimizing negative, long-term impacts.

#### CONTEXT

The greater Seattle area faces significant risk from chronic stressors like gentrification and the regional impacts of climate change. We also anticipate one or more future major seismic events emanating from the multiple fault lines and subduction zones within the Puget Sound basin. The City of Seattle is developing a broad resilience strategy while also developing specific plans to direct seismic upgrades in much of the City’s older building stock. Seattle King County Public Health and Seattle’s Office of Emergency Management provide emergency preparedness resources. We will complement these as well as local efforts committed to cultural resilience in the neighborhood.

#### *City of Seattle Resilience Strategy*<sup>6</sup>

In 2017, Seattle was selected by the Rockefeller Foundation to be in the third and final round of cohorts of the 100 Resilient Cities. In 2018, the City of Seattle hired a Chief Resilience Officer and plans to release a Resilience Strategy in spring 2019. According to the City website, the Strategy will be “a concrete action plan that outlines projects and initiatives specifically tailored to our strengths and vulnerabilities. The purpose of the Strategy is to give Seattle a strong foundation to build resilience and to spur coordination and resilience thinking.”

#### *City of Seattle All-Hazards Mitigation Plan*<sup>7</sup>

The Seattle City Council formally adopted the 2015 update of the Seattle All-Hazards Mitigation Plan (Seattle HMP) on December 7, 2015, and the Plan was approved by FEMA in February 2016. The Seattle HMP assesses the potential impact of the natural and human-caused hazards to the City of Seattle’s (City’s) communities and provides mitigation goals and strategies to reduce impacts. The Seattle HMP prioritizes the City’s mitigation strategies and includes a comprehensive implementation

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/resilience/strategy>

<sup>7</sup> <https://bit.ly/2OMwNpT>

plan. The overall purpose of the Seattle HMP is to strategically guide actions and investments in such a way as to reduce the impacts of natural and human-caused hazards on human life and property.

#### *City of Seattle Disaster Recovery Framework<sup>8</sup>*

The purpose of the City of Seattle Disaster Recovery Framework is to ensure recovery from a major disaster is “effective, efficient, and equitable.” The Framework serves to: Explore options for restoration of critical community functions, services, vital resources, facilities, programs, and infrastructure; establish a framework for engaging those that should or need to be involved; and guide pre-disaster preparations.

#### *Citywide Emergency Management Program Strategic Plan 2018-2020<sup>9</sup> -- City of Seattle*

Prepared by the Seattle Office of Emergency Management with input from a “cadre of City departments and community agencies and members,” the Strategic Plan was first written in 2013. The 2018 update addresses three strategic priorities: 1) strengthen comprehensive citywide emergency management capabilities; 2) encourage/Inspire communities to be prepared; 3) support/facilitate a more resilient community through innovative mitigation and recovery efforts.”

#### *Emergency preparedness -- Public Health, Seattle and King County<sup>10</sup>*

Emergency Preparedness is a division of Public Health, Seattle and King County. Their mission is to promote and ensure the health and safety of the whole community before, during, and after emergencies and disasters.

#### *Community Resilience + Equity -- Public Health, Seattle and King County<sup>11</sup>*

Community Resilience + Equity (CR+E) is a program within Emergency Preparedness that works collaboratively with community partners to ensure that groups impacted by inequities are no more impacted than any other group in an emergency.

#### *Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Policy Committee Recommendations -- City of Seattle<sup>12</sup>*

Earthquakes are Seattle’s greatest disaster risk. In response to the prevalence of URM buildings in Seattle, the City convened a committee to develop policy recommendations to support the vulnerable occupants of these older, brick buildings. According to the City’s website: “The City of Seattle’s Department of Construction and Inspections (SDCI) is considering a mandate for all URM to undergo a seismic retrofit to reduce the risk of injury and loss of life in the case of an earthquake.”

#### *Seattle Police Department (SPD) Safe Place<sup>13</sup>*

According to the SPD Safe Place website: “The mission of the SPD SAFE PLACE is to provide the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ) community with signage and resources that provide easily accessible safety information.” SPD Safe Place signage is provided to local businesses and

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<sup>8</sup> <https://bit.ly/2PqPqom>

<sup>9</sup> <https://bit.ly/2FnIYLt>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/emergency-preparedness.aspx>

<sup>11</sup> <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/health/emergency-preparedness/Community-Resilience-Equity.aspx>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web\\_informational/p3452259.pdf](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/cs/groups/pan/@pan/documents/web_informational/p3452259.pdf)

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.seattle.gov/spd-safe-place>



community organizations “that work closely with the Seattle Police Department in an effort to reduce anti-LGBTQ crimes, reduce LGBTQ student bullying and encourage the reporting of LGBTQ crimes. These are also locations supporting safe and secure places for victims of anti-LGBTQ related crimes and harassment.”

#### *Capitol Hill Arts District*<sup>14</sup>

The Capitol Hill neighborhood is experiencing rapid change and gentrification. Existing arts organizations are at risk of being displaced by rising rents and redevelopment. Capitol Hill is increasingly perceived as having lost its soul. Capitol Hill was the first district to be named as part of the Arts & Cultural Districts program, in November 2014. The Capitol Hill Arts District is a coalition of arts advocates galvanized to keep Capitol Hill a thriving art scene invested in the creation of daring work, independent artists, and emerging ideas. The Arts District promotes cultural engagement; harnesses resources; and preserves, enhances, and creates space for artists and the arts.

#### Resilience Challenges

Resilience efforts within the EcoDistrict support city-wide efforts and focus on specific neighborhood challenges. These challenges include:

- Gentrification and displacement
- Social cohesion
- Cultural resilience
- Health and public safety
- Regional climate change impacts
- Regional habitat loss
- Seismic risks

*Gentrification and Displacement:* In March 2017, the *Puget Sound Business Journal* reported that the Seattle area is the ninth fastest-growing metro in the nation, gaining about 1,100 residents per week.<sup>15</sup> Within the EcoDistrict, there has been a huge building boom driven by the opening of new light rail station in 2016 and other infrastructure investments combined with rapid growth in the technology sector in nearby neighborhoods, accelerating a demand for housing. However, the rate of development has not kept pace with demand and the vast majority of new units are unaffordable to existing neighborhood residents. Rising land values and housing prices pose a major resiliency challenge as current residents are priced out and forced to relocate off of Capitol Hill. Among those priced out are many artists and other long-term residents who contribute vitally to the culture of the neighborhood. There are a lack of homes with two or more bedrooms, forcing families to leave the neighborhood in search of housing, along with the teachers and daycare providers that serve the school children of these families. Affordability is also a major challenge for small businesses as commercial rents have also rapidly risen. In one of Capitol Hill’s zip codes, 98122, commercial rents rose 42 percent between 2008 and 2016.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> <http://capitolhillarts.org/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.bizjournals.com/seattle/news/2017/03/23/seattle-king-county-population-growth-estimates.html>

<sup>16</sup> <https://bit.ly/2PuHwqx>

*Social Cohesion:* Capitol Hill has long been a renter-dominated neighborhood. Organizing renters is a challenge in the best of times, but especially difficult during times of rapid growth when tenures often get shortened by the displacement pressures of rapidly rising rents. In a 2015 series of focus groups, CHH discovered a common sentiment among residents that development is happening TO and not WITH the neighborhood.

*Cultural Resilience:* Capitol Hill has long been Seattle's center of LGBTQ life, and is considered one of the top three "gayborhoods" in the nation, along with Chelsea in New York City, and The Castro in San Francisco. Capitol Hill is also a hub for the arts, especially fringe art. The vibrant LGBTQ and arts communities, past and present, represent the soul/cultural anchor of Capitol Hill. These communities face significant health and displacement pressures.

Capitol Hill also struggles with its status as a prime nightlife destination. While nightlife brings business into the neighborhood and is an important part of the culture, loud and rowdy crowds from other places also contribute to residents feeling like the neighborhood is being taken over. An increase in bias crimes has further contributed to this sentiment and resulted in people feeling unsafe walking at night, especially on weekends.

*Health and Public Safety:* Health risks affecting the EcoDistrict include homelessness, drug addiction, bias crimes and limited access to open space and nature. Other health/safety challenges:

- Exposure to noise, due to a 30 percent increase in airport traffic over the last few years. I-5 also contributes to the noise issues on the west slope of the neighborhood;
- Exposure to air pollution, due to the interstate and local traffic, as well as seasonal wildfires;
- Traffic crashes/traffic safety, especially for those on foot and bicycle and;
- Healthcare access/expenses.

*Seismic Risks:* The Capitol Hill EcoDistrict includes 140 buildings on the City's list of buildings with unreinforced masonry (URM). Worldwide, URM buildings are a primary cause of loss of life during earthquakes, both inside the building and on the adjacent sidewalk and street. Many local URM buildings offer some of the most affordable rental housing and commercial space in the neighborhood. They also contribute to much of the neighborhood's architectural character. Strategies to address this risk should include preservation where feasible.

*Regional Climate Change Impacts:* In the Pacific Northwest, increasing average annual temperature with wetter winters and drier summers will contribute to:

- More frequent extreme heat events (days over 92°F).
- Declining snowpack affecting summer water supplies.
- Shifting streamflow levels and increased flood risk as more precipitation falls as rain and snowpack melts earlier.
- Increase in seasonal wildfires, which degrade regional air quality.

*Regional Habitat Loss:* Over the past century, wildlife habitat in the region has been rapidly transformed by the creation of dense human habitat as on Capitol Hill. Vertebrate and invertebrate wildlife species have experienced habitat loss and alteration, interrupted migration patterns, displacement, reduced

reproductive success, and exposure to invasive species and pollution. As the region's landscape has become fragmented and vegetated habitats have shrunk, animal populations have been split and isolated.

### Vulnerable Populations

CHH and the CHEDSC are committed to working alongside vulnerable individuals and communities in the neighborhood, including homeless people, low-income households, seniors, youth, the disabled, and groups targeted with discrimination, including people of color and LGBTQ folks. Especially vulnerable are people at the intersection of race, gender, gender-identity and other forms of discrimination.

### RESILIENCE WORK PLAN

#### Resilience in the Formation Phase

1. Outreach to at-risk groups and organizations serving at-risk groups to discuss resilience challenges and goals (2019).
2. Recruit at-risk group representatives for the CHEDSC (ongoing).
3. Strengthen collective impact model to increase shared ownership of EcoDistrict among collaborating partners (2019).
4. Use a strengths-based approach to map community social and infrastructure assets and highlight where those assets can be complemented to build resilience (2019).

#### Resilience in the Roadmap Phase

5. Host a community meeting that: 1) provides an overview of Seattle's Emergency Management Program Strategic Plan<sup>17</sup> and related plans; 2) familiarizes stakeholders with existing Capitol Hill-specific resources (e.g. function and location of Community Emergency Hubs); and 3) explores designation of Capitol Hill as a Seattle Neighborhoods Actively Prepare<sup>18</sup> neighborhood (2019).
6. Engage CHEDSC, at-risk groups, and other collaborating partners in assessing community risk profile, prioritize strategies, and map roles in near- and long-term mitigation (2019).

#### Resilience in the Performance Phase

7. Develop a Capitol Hill Emergency Preparedness Plan (2020).
8. Meet with at-risk groups to review the burdens and benefits from execution of resilience strategies and recommend strategy adjustments (2020, then biannually).
9. Provide community education for residents and local businesses on what to do during and immediately following an earthquake (2020).
10. Engage CHEDSC and other collaborating partners in ongoing evaluation of resilience results and strategy adjustments to improve outcomes (2020, then biannually).

### RESPONSIBILITIES

Capitol Hill Housing: CHH is the backbone organization for the EcoDistrict and partners with other key organizations, including the Capitol Hill Chamber, the Capitol Hill Renter Initiative and Capitol Hill Community Council, as well as other local educational institutions, health providers, arts organizations,

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<sup>17</sup><https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Emergency/strategic%20plan.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> <https://bit.ly/2SYpyhy>

community groups, neighborhood activists and professional associations. CHH staff will lead tasks 1 and 4 in the Formation Phase, bringing in external expertise when appropriate.

CHH also works in close partnership with the City of Seattle and will support the City's work funded by the Rockefeller Foundation 100 Resilient Cities program. We will continue to work with the City and its multiple departments affecting Capitol Hill's public and private realms.

Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Steering Committee: The CHEDSC is comprised of volunteers representing local organizations and entities, providing programmatic oversight. With support from CHH staff, the CHEDSC holds primary responsibility for executing tasks 5-9 in the Formation and Roadmap Phases.

Capitol Hill Renter Initiative: The CHRI provides community organizing capacity and leadership development. The CHRI Leadership Committee will collaborate with the CHEDSC on the Roadmap.

#### INDICATORS

- Percent of CHEDSC members that reside in the EcoDistrict
- Number of unreinforced masonry buildings existing and retrofitted in the EcoDistrict
- Number of "unhealthy" air quality days

#### EVALUATION AND ADJUSTMENT

Overall performance of the Resilience work plan above will be evaluated at the completion of the Formation phase of the EcoDistrict and be part of a biennial performance evaluation and report.

#### LETTER OF SUPPORT

Attached letter of support from Rachel Minnery, Sr. Director, Resilience, Adaptation and Disaster Assistance at American Institute of Architects

#### **CLIMATE PROTECTION COMMITMENT**

By 2050, the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict commits to achieving Net Zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the production of energy, construction, transportation, and the management of waste within the EcoDistrict. We will promote conservation and localized or on-site renewable energy, remove sources of combustion, advance environmentally progressive building standards, support carbon free transportation, and reduce the amount of material sent to landfills.

The Ecodistrict will collaborate with the City of Seattle and King County to meaningfully reduce carbon emissions. At the City, we will work with the Seattle Department of Transportation, Department of Construction and Inspections, Parks and Recreation, Seattle Public Utilities, City Light, the Office of Planning and Community Development, the Office of Sustainability and the Environment, and the City Council to support the policy and operational changes that advance our climate neutrality goal. King County Metro and Sound Transit will provide the transit backbone of the carbon free transportation system.

The building trades and associations will be instrumental in creating and implementing best practices reflected in green building standards. Building owners, managers, residents must also play a role in through their personal efforts to conserve resources and divert waste

## CONTEXT

The largest GHG contributors in Capitol Hill are transportation, the use of natural gas, the construction of buildings, and municipal solid waste. Building energy use and trolley bus power are not sources of GHG emissions as the EcoDistrict is served by Seattle City Light (SCL), which achieved net zero GHG emissions in 2005. More than 90 percent of the electricity generated by SCL is derived from clean, hydroelectric power. The remaining ten percent of SCL's energy comes from renewables or is mitigated by SCL's investment in carbon offsets.<sup>19</sup>

The Capitol Hill EcoDistrict will prepare a detailed baseline energy use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions inventory during the Roadmap phase and track energy use and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on an ongoing basis during the Performance phase. Emissions figures will be estimates based on the best available data that is reasonable to collect and most relevant to the Capitol Hill neighborhood.

The EcoDistrict also has a role in climate protection by preserving the livability and affordability of the neighborhood for people of diverse incomes, thus reducing greenfield sprawl pressures in the region.

### Transportation

For transportation, we will focus on commute trips as the most consistently available metric. We will use the following data sources:

- U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), B08134 Means of Transportation to Work by Travel Time to Work
- U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD)
- Major Employer Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Surveys

These sources will provide us with commute trips by mode of transportation for both residents living on Capitol Hill and workers working here. They will provide different metrics regarding distance that will need to be converted into vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The ACS provides travel time to work. The LEHD and CTR data provide origin and destination by zip code. The ACS will provide data on Capitol Hill residents. LEHD and CTR will provide data on Capitol Hill workers.

Once a VMT figure is calculated, we will use standard estimates from the City of Seattle for fuel efficiency of the local vehicle fleet, 23 miles per gallon as of 2014. We estimate that burning a gallon of gasoline creates  $8.89 \times 10^{-3}$  tons of CO<sub>2</sub>. Half of the VMT per trip will be allocated to the EcoDistrict. For workers in the district, each data source, LEHD and CTR, will be weighted equally and account for 50 percent of the calculation for worker commutes trips.

### Energy Use in Buildings

For energy use in building, we will focus on non-electrical energy use. Seattle's electrical provider, SCL, is a carbon neutral utility. The remaining energy use in the EcoDistrict is primarily from natural gas. When available, we will use reported energy use for buildings larger than 20,000 square feet through the City's energy benchmarking program. For building data not available through this program, we will use data on utility connections and modeling from the Seattle 2030 District to estimate natural gas usage. These estimates will be replaced with actual numbers as more building participate in the benchmarking

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.seattle.gov/light/greenest/cleanhydro.asp>

program. We will convert BTUs of natural gas to carbon dioxide emissions coefficients using 117 pounds or 53.07 kilograms of CO<sub>2</sub> per million BTUs.

### Waste

Our waste calculations will use cubic yard measurements for the containers of landfill, recycling, and yard waste for both residential and commercial hauling. We will then use citywide surveys of the composition of each of those three waste streams to infer the composition of waste on Capitol Hill. We will convert volume to weight for each component of waste and then use weight to GHG emissions conversions from the City of Seattle. Emissions calculations include transportation of the waste, methane release, and sequestration in the landfill following the City of Seattle's methodology.

SCL is primarily powered by hydroelectric dams and wind turbines. The net production of this facilities allows the city and Capitol Hill neighborhood to be powered by renewable energy. The water system for the City of Seattle is fed by a gravity-based system, this almost eliminates the need for pumping of both supply and wastewater. King County, who operates the wastewater facilities for the City of Seattle, relies on the same renewable energy grid as the City, and the County's Wastewater Treatment Division uses its wastewater treatment facilities to divert all biosolids collected for use as an agricultural soil amendment. For these reasons, the Ecodistrict will not focus resources on emissions from grid-supplied electricity, the supply of water, and the management of wastewater.

In 2011, recognizing that the Kyoto Protocol goal is just the first step forward in reducing climate pollution, the Seattle Mayor and City Council adopted a bold climate protection vision for Seattle: reach zero net GHG emissions by 2050, and prepare for the likely impacts of climate change. The following is an excerpt for context from the Seattle Climate Action Plan (CAP), with some editing for space:

The 2013 CAP provides a coordinated strategy for action that cuts across City functions, and focuses on City actions that reduce GHG emissions while also supporting other community goals, including building vibrant neighborhoods, fostering economic prosperity, and enhancing social equity. While GHG emissions can be found in virtually every sector of our community and economy, the 2013 CAP focuses on those sectors where City action is most needed and will have the greatest impact: road transportation, building energy, and waste. In addition, the 2013 CAP includes City actions that will increase our community's resilience to the likely impacts of climate change.<sup>20</sup>

The City has many plans for improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the community. The CAP is implemented through related plans that are developed and executed across multiple City departments. The CAP works with and through these plans by:

- Providing a planning and monitoring framework for achieving climate change goals.
- Highlighting critical actions for reducing emissions and fostering resilience to climate impacts.
- Guiding consideration of emissions reduction potential across the range of City plans.

Many of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Index targets related to local climate protection strategies also are derived or extrapolated from the same municipal plans. The Index was developed in partnership with

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<sup>20</sup> [https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OSE/2013\\_CAP\\_20130612.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OSE/2013_CAP_20130612.pdf)

the Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment to align with or exceed City-wide targets. We also have aligned the scope of the EcoDistrict's climate protection work with the City's scope.

## POLICY CONTEXT

Listed below are the relevant City, county, and regional policies that the Steering Committee will use to inform its strategy and project planning. The City of Seattle and King County governments and the Puget Sound Regional Council adopted these strategies, policies and regulations to support the region to mitigate and adapt to climate change, moving toward carbon neutrality over the next decade or decades. As well, these plans relate a goal of accommodating increased migration to the city, county, and region resulting from more severe climate change-related impacts in other places. They help to set baselines that the EcoDistrict can use to assess changing conditions within the neighborhood and the impact that local initiatives might have on climate and other environmental stressors.

### **City of Seattle**

#### *Climate Change: Climate Action Plan<sup>21</sup>*

The City of Seattle's Climate Action Plan contains 12 initiatives to help the city meet its goal of carbon neutrality by 2050. It aims to ease congestion, reduce GHG emissions, expand transit, bicycling and pedestrian priorities, address buildings and utilities, convert oil heating and use of gas to electric (solar), prioritize green construction and update municipal buildings.

#### *Climate Change: 2012 GHG Inventory<sup>22</sup>*

The GHG inventory shows that total emissions have decreased by 5% since 2008; a 58% reduction by 2030 will lead us towards carbon neutrality by 2050. Our growing population has resulted in a 20% decrease during the baseline 2018 year.

#### *Climate Change: Planning for Climate Impacts<sup>23</sup>*

The climate preparedness planning priorities for achieving climate resilience are equity, community co-benefits and promoting natural system solutions.

#### *Transportation and Land Use: Programs and Policies<sup>24</sup>*

By evaluating cost effectiveness and implementing feasible strategies to affect investment in transit, bicycling, walking and parking management, climate pollution reduction will occur. SDOT will support advances in fuel efficiency and electric vehicles. Building energy use policy is currently being surveyed to implement supportive programs and policy, leading Seattle to carbon neutrality in 2050.

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/climate-change/climate-action-plan>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OSE/2012%20GHG%20inventory%20report\\_final.pdf](https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/OSE/2012%20GHG%20inventory%20report_final.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/climate-change/planning-for-climate-impacts>

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/transportation-and-land-use/programs-and-policies#programspolicies>

### *Transportation and Land Use: Codes and Regulations<sup>25</sup>*

The City of Seattle creates a comprehensive plan with citywide goals that reflect policy, but through use of implementation tools create programs and initiatives that become regulations in full support of addressing the climate crisis and working towards carbon neutrality in 2050. The Land Use Code, Stormwater Code and Environmentally Critical Area Codes are examples of codes that regulate building and transportation and support program creation.

### *Transportation and Land Use: Strategic Plans<sup>26</sup>*

By implementing strategies that include health, safety and equity in transportation and land use, the City of Seattle will promote the Healthy Living Assessment project shifting to less travel by increased modes that generate fewer or zero greenhouse gas emissions. By designating urban centers, with active concentrations of housing and business, the anticipated growth is accommodated, businesses are strengthened, walking, cycling and public transit are encouraged and the character of the neighborhoods / districts are preserved.

### *Buildings: Programs and Policies<sup>27</sup>*

Building programs and policies will strive towards the addition of housing units (some of which, must be affordable), creating jobs, providing access to frequent transit service, preserving sidewalks and providing access to open space.

### *Buildings: Codes and Regulations<sup>28</sup>*

Within Seattle's Code and Regulation requirements, we will see requirements for Master Plans that prioritize Historic Preservation, Housing Levy, Street and Sidewalk use, Building Codes will address water heating, lighting, metering and address the roof, window, etc. ability to control heat loss and air leakage.

### *Buildings: Strategic Plans<sup>29</sup>*

The Seattle plan to reduce carbon by eliminating combustion of fossil fuel like oil, natural gas in furnaces or water heaters and making sure our energy is sourced from low carbon sources, will improve our overall energy efficiency. This will allow for the restructure of permit fees with possible incentivization.

### *Waste: Programs and Policies<sup>30</sup>*

With mandatory recycling, Seattle is addressing the programs and policies of waste collection, while still working towards the reduction of waste sent to landfill. While the residential per capita waste has dropped to an all time low, and the recycling rate has risen, the need to continue is heightened as Seattle's population continues to grow.

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/transportation-and-land-use/programs-and-policies#codesregulations>

<sup>26</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/transportation-and-land-use/programs-and-policies#strategicplans>

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/buildings-and-energy/programs-and-policies#programspolicies>

<sup>28</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/buildings-and-energy/programs-and-policies#codesregulations>

<sup>29</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/buildings-and-energy/programs-and-policies#strategicplans>

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/waste/programs-and-policies#programspolicies>



*Waste: Codes and Regulations*<sup>31</sup>

The city of Seattle is continually revising codes and regulations to encourage greater recycling and composting while the landfill collection diminishes. There is great analysis of container size, fees and regulations that can have the effect of reducing the waste residents and businesses dispose of, using education to reduce overall consumption and waste!

*Waste: Solid Waste Management Plan*<sup>32</sup>

Seattle's current Solid Waste Management uses contracted services to encourage reduced elimination through cost, reduced pick up, strict enforcement of regulations and fines. Continued enforcement will inform reduction that enhances the Seattle goal to reduce landfill.

**King County:**

*King County Strategic Climate Action Plan*<sup>33</sup>

King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan focuses on reducing regional greenhouse gas emissions, preparing for devastating climate events, supporting resilience in community and integrating this ambitious performance plan through strong goals and clear policies.

**Puget Sound Region:**

*Puget Sound Regional Council: Transportation 2040*<sup>34</sup>

A four county effort to organize and plan climate sensitive transportation revisions throughout the region, Transportation 2040 puts forward a growth management strategy for transportation that will replace Destination 2030. The guidelines address the federal mandates and asks that they be developed through an open and inclusive process to ensure public input.

WORK PLAN

Climate Protection in the Formation Phase

1. Ensure vulnerable groups, including homeless people, low-income households, seniors, youth, the disabled, and groups targeted for discrimination, including people of color and LGBTQ folks, understand our climate protection goal and have an opportunity to participate (2019).
2. Recruit climate protection practitioners and vulnerable group representatives to the CHEDSC (ongoing).

Climate Protection in the Roadmap Phase

3. Ensure full participation of CHEDSC and other community stakeholder group representatives in the development of the Roadmap, including inclusive workshop design and pre-workshop orientation sessions (2019).
4. Conduct a carbon-screening of all projects and programs during the strategies ranking step of the Roadmap (2019).
5. Prepare a baseline inventory of all CO2 sources (2019).

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.seattle.gov/environment/waste/programs-and-policies#codesregulations>

<sup>32</sup> <https://bit.ly/2Ph3VLj>

<sup>33</sup> <http://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/climate/strategies/strategic-climate-action-plan.aspx>

<sup>34</sup> <https://www.psrc.org/our-work/transportation-2040>

6. Develop targets for reducing carbon sources in the land use, building energy and waste sectors related to land use, building energy, and waste indicators (2019).

#### Climate Protection in the Performance Phase

7. As part of our biennial progress reporting, prepare an evaluation of carbon reduction results to date, and recommend strategy adjustments to accelerate the rate of reduction (2020, every other year thereafter).
8. Meet with climate protection partner groups to review the burdens and benefits from the execution of climate projection strategies to date, and recommend strategy adjustments, if needed, for improving equitable outcomes (2020, every other year thereafter).

#### RESPONSIBILITIES

Capitol Hill Housing: CHH is the backbone organization of the Capitol Hill EcoDistrict and provides staffing for its coordination and delivery of programs. Staff compiles and analyzes data for evaluating EcoDistrict initiatives and leads community engagement. CHH staff will lead tasks 1-2 in the Formation Phase, bringing in external expertise when appropriate.

Capitol Hill EcoDistrict Steering Committee: The CHEDSC is comprised of volunteers representing local organizations and entities, providing programmatic oversight. With support from CHH staff, the CHEDSC holds primary responsibility for tasks 3-8 in the Formation and Roadmap Phases.

Capitol Hill Renter Initiative: The CHRI provides community organizing capacity and leadership development. The CHEDSC members and staff will solicit feedback from the CHRI Leadership Committee on the Formation and Roadmap Phases.

Partners: Achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 will require work across all sectors, with a special focus on the transportation and building sectors, and working with local businesses and resident households. The CHEDSC and CHH will partner with the City to support its policy efforts in reducing GHG emission and solid waste and with the Seattle 2030 District in its work to create a high-performance building district. Other key partners will include the Capitol Hill Chamber of Commerce to communicate with area businesses and the Capitol Hill Renter Initiative and Capitol Hill Community Council to communicate with residents.

#### INDICATORS

We will track GHG emission indicators within the land use, building energy, and waste sectors. We have selected 4 initial indicators tracked by the City of Seattle as part of their carbon neutrality goal.

##### Transportation

- Commute trips: Emissions from single occupancy vehicle commutes for both residents and workers in the district

##### Building Energy

- Sources of combustion: Emissions from the use of natural gas and heating oil in all buildings in the district.
- On-site renewable energy: number of megawatts hours of production from on-site renewable energy installed and functioning in the district.

Waste

- Methane release: Emissions from the release of methane from waste generated in the district
- Transportation: Emissions from the hauling of waste generated in the district

EVALUATION AND ADJUSTMENT

The performance indicators will be regularly updated as data becomes available. Goals and strategies are adjusted biannually in response to evaluation results.

LETTER OF SUPPORT

Attached letter of support from Jessica Finn Coven, Director, City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment

**Signature:** Neelima Shah  
Neelima Shah (Dec 23, 2020 09:00 PST)

**Email:** nshah@bullitt.org

**Signature:** 

**Email:** mike@schemataworkshop.com